

Convention and Tourism Advisory Committee
Tuesday, May 1, 2007 – Minutes

Members Present: Kathy Tolbert, Dennis Lauver, Jennifer Sturges, Rosie Leek, Ardean Maxey, Ben Vidricksen, Bette Timmel

Members Absent: Tricia Weems

Guests/Staff Present: Keith Rawlings – Salina Bicentennial Center; Sylvia Rice, Tiffany Benien, Andi Pahl – Chamber Staff

Minutes

The Minutes of the April 2007 meeting were reviewed.

Financial Statement

The March 2007 Financial Statement was reviewed. Sylvia distributed and discussed a pie chart relating to how important tourism is in Kansas.

Division Updates:

Sports Market

Tiffany gave the following sports market report:

- **Triple Crown Sports** – Tiffany stated that youth baseball and softball games would be held at Bill Burke Park and East Crawford Recreation Area this weekend. Thirty to 40 teams will participate in the event.
- **Run for the Wall** – The POW/MIA annual Run for the Wall event will take place in Thomas Park May 20. It is part of the national Rolling Thunder group that will meet in Washington, DC on Memorial Day. Local veterans will put on a barbeque and program Sunday night and they are looking for volunteers to help prepare the meal.
- **KSHSAA 5A State Baseball/Softball Tournaments** – Salina will host the 5A State tournaments May 25-26. Baseball will be at Dean Evans Stadium and softball at Bill Burke Park. There will be a total of 16 teams competing. We are looking for volunteers for this event to sell T-shirts and programs.
- **Kansas Junior Golf Association** – Tiffany spoke with Tom Rouse, KJGA representative, who stated there would be approximately 300-500 youth golfers coming to the Salina Municipal Golf Course to compete in a tournament July 23-26. This event will also bring a lot of families to Salina. There is no “headquarters” hotel, as they will be staying at many hotels around town.
- **Special Olympics** – Special Olympics has inquired about hosting their softball and golf tournaments in Salina for the fall of 2009.
- **National Sports Commission Conference** – Tiffany attended the educational NASC conference in Dallas in April and reported that more than 500 CVBs attended. A common challenge among them is evaluating what a sports event is worth. Many of the segments involved discussion around this. She also attended a Certified Sports Event Executive (CSEE) workshop held on “interviewing with the media.”

Convention Market

Sylvia gave the following convention market update in Jo Ann’s absence:

- Sylvia said that Jo Ann was attending the DMAI sales academy in Las Vegas the first week of May.
- **Kansas Twins Conference** – Sylvia reported that this fun event was held at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center April 27-29 and got good media coverage. Participants came from all over Kansas. They gave us credit for getting them new members.
- **Kansas Airport Association** – This group of 60 met in Salina for the first time April 5-6 at the Courtyard by Marriott and was a very good event.
- **PETS/SETS** – PETS/SETS met April 13-14 at the Salina Bicentennial Center. Andi helped with registration and welcome packets. There were approximately 200 in attendance this year.
- **Kansas Square Dance Convention** – The Square Dancers will be back again for their 56th annual convention. It will be held at the Salina Bicentennial Center June 1-2. We will set up an information booth manned by volunteers. Dennis Lauver and Sherri Barragree will give welcome addresses on Friday and Saturday evenings, respectively. We will also sponsor an ice cream social on Friday night.
- Jo Ann attended the Affordable Meetings trade show in Chicago April 10-12 representing the Meet Kansas coalition. This was our third year attending this event.
- **TOPS** – The TOPS convention will be at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center May 4-6. They will be doing a walk that takes them across Crawford Street and a parade permit was required to do this. Sylvia and Andi will be meeting with them to help with the crossing. Sylvia will also be giving a welcome address.
- Jo Ann has conducted a lot of site visits recently; one in particular is for a three-year bid.
- Over 2,000 welcome packets were prepared for the month of April

Tourism Market

Sylvia gave the following report:

- **Kansas Tourism Initiative** – Sylvia presented a KTI program in Lucas for the Northwest Tourism Council meeting April 24. They are in the research phase of KTI – a comprehensive plan to stimulate tourism in Kansas.
- **Kansas Adventure Times Three** – Sylvia will be attending a KATT retreat in Hutchinson where they will develop a plan for next year. They will be going to the new Salt Museum for a tour.
- **Publications/Communications Task Force** – A May 16th meeting is planned for the Publications/Communications task force where they will be looking at different artwork and proposals from graphic designers.
- Sylvia announced that Kansas Travel & Tourism did a film shoot on Saturday, April 28 for a TV ad campaign. Filming was done at Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure (Zoo & Museum), Smoky Hill Vineyards & Winery, Smoky Hill Museum, and downtown Salina. The 30-second ads produced from this shoot will begin showing May 9 in cities such as Des Moines, Omaha, Kansas City and Oklahoma City. Five other communities are participating in the ads. Sylvia stated that the CVB would have access to all of the footage taken.
- Sylvia attended a media event in Denver on April 11 where 26 travel writers were in attendance. She will be following up with some leads.
- **FAM Tour** – Sylvia stated that the CVB would be hosting a FAM tour for two travel writers coming from the southwest to Salina in June. They will be visiting the Smoky Hills Vineyard & Winery, Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure, and the Smoky Hill Bison Company before going on to Lindsborg.
- Sylvia announced that a cultural assessment going on in Salina continues, designated “The Big Ideas.” There are 70 people on this steering committee. They are collecting a lot of public opinions. The *Salina Journal*’s 333 line was discussed.
- Sylvia announced that May 12-20 is National Tourism Week and we will continue to thank the front-line employees for a job well done. Plans for the event are now being made.

Statistics:

- Sylvia reported that based on the Smith Travel Report (STR), there was a slight decrease for March. Occupancy dipped 6%, while the average daily rate grew 6%.

Committee Discussion

Keith Rawlings reported that the Shrine Circus that was at the Salina Bicentennial Center in April had their largest attendance since 2001. The Kansas Cagerz started their season. Comedian Jeff Dunham will perform there in May. The Bicenter staff is also gearing up for the many commencements being held there in May. More wedding receptions are also being held than in the recent past. The Smoky Hill River Festival’s Big Band performance is also coming up in June. Keith also said that the new scoreboard has not yet been installed but they had a fifth sponsor come forward. They will begin ordering equipment soon.

Kathy Tolbert said that they are gearing up for the upcoming Mother’s Day “Wild About Moms” event at Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure, which will feature a quilt show this year. The new exhibit to be displayed in the Earl Bane Gallery is “Mechanical Cabaret” on loan from London, England through August. Kathy also stated that they have already scheduled many school tour groups throughout the summer.

Ben Vidricksen related a story about the State Tourism Committee going to the Hutchinson salt mines in the 1990s saying it was a very interesting place. He also stated that they would be taking opening bids for the Scout Museum beginning May 9. They are hoping the museum will be open after the first of next year. Ben said the Yesteryear Museum had a great open house April 28.

Dennis Lauver announced that the City Commission would be holding a public meeting dealing with the size and scope of the Expo Center project. Dennis is optimistic and believes the process will take three to six months.

Ardean Maxey, who is new to Kansas and Salina, said she has been having fun exploring the state and just made a trip to Yoder and the cement store in Burton.

Next Meeting

The next Convention & Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting will be held June 5 at the Chamber.

The meeting adjourned at 8:23am.